

**Executive Committee for Highway Safety
Older Driver Safety
Working Group Meeting Minutes – Mtg. #7**

October 4, 2006

Location:

AARP State Office, Raleigh, NC @ 10:00 a.m.

Attending:

Jane Stutts, Chair	UNC Highway Safety Research Center
Suzanne LaFollette-Black	NC AARP
Cliff Braam	NC DOT Traffic Engineering & Safety Systems Branch
Phyllis Bridgeman	NC DHHS Division of Aging and Adult Services
Sherry Creech	NC DMV Driver License Medical Review Branch
Stacie Cruz	NC Governor's Highway Safety Program
Davis Fort	Physician, retired
Frank Hackney	NC Governor's Highway Safety Program
Susan Stewart	NC DMV Driver License Medical Review Branch
Kristen Bovid	UNC School of Government (follow-up subcommittee meeting)

Minutes:

Jane welcomed those attending and asked for any proposed changes or additions to the agenda for the day's meeting. It was agreed that the group should focus on finalizing strategies to present to the ECHS at its next scheduled meeting on October 24. Cliff Braam had indicated that he would need to have all strategies that have been approved by our group submitted to him by Wednesday, October 11 in order to distribute them to ECHS members for review prior to the meeting. Given the large number of working groups, each is asked to submit no more than two strategies at a time; however, Cliff said that our group might be able to submit more than this, depending on how many strategies are submitted by the other groups. He recommended going ahead and making decisions on all four of the draft strategies on the day's agenda, and then prioritizing them for presentation to the ECHS.

Jane noted that copies of these strategies had been distributed to all members of the group via e-mail on September 20. Pending the results of the day's discussion, revised versions would be prepared and circulated. It was agreed that it would be the responsibility of members not present to get any feedback on the strategies to Jane by Oct. 9 if this feedback is to be considered for incorporation into the strategy.

Review of Draft Strategies

Strategy 1 - Improve Signage at Non-Standard Interchange Approaches

This strategy has been the focus of much of the roadway subcommittee's attention over the past year and a half, and much of the legwork of the strategy has already been carried out by Kevin Lacy, Dr. Davis Fort, and Frank Winecoff. Phyllis Bridgman questioned whether we might be more specific about what was expected or anticipated with regard to the evaluation component of the strategy. Cliff noted that an evaluation group within the Traffic Engineering and Safety Systems Branch would likely be responsible for planning and conducting the evaluation. It was suggested that some text be added to clarify this point, and also that some of the other "missing" information (such as anticipated costs) could either be omitted or left as "to be determined." The group agreed to approve this strategy for presentation to the ECHS, pending these changes.

Strategy 2 – Identify Hazardous Intersections and Improve Their Safety for Older Drivers

This strategy sets forth a process by which intersection locations in the state that pose particular problems for older drivers are identified, and changes recommended to improve their safety. The process involves examining crash data to identify intersections with high numbers and/or proportions of older driver crashes; reviewing the particular crash patterns at these sites; and involving older drivers in visiting the sites and devising solutions to the problem. This strategy is an expansion of what the DOT Traffic Engineering already does as part of its Highway Safety Improvement Program. It was suggested that some additional text be added to the description of the strategy emphasizing the important role of older drivers in this process. There was also some follow-up discussion of just how these older adult volunteers might be recruited and identified to state and local DOT staff responsible for addressing the problem locations. For example, Suzanne LaFollette Black indicated that the state's AARP Driver Safety Program instructors might want to become involved. Cliff volunteered to send out a list of NC DOT Divisional office contacts.

Cliff said that before submitting this strategy to the ECHS, we should first give the Intersection Working Group the opportunity to review and comment on it. He agreed to follow up with the chair of that group, Terry Hopkins, and get back in touch with Jane.

Strategy 3 – Improve the Roadway and Driving Environment to Better Accommodate the Special Needs of Older Road Users: Building Capacity

Like the two strategies above, work has already been carried out by the Coalition to implement this strategy. The focus of the strategy is on increasing awareness among DOT engineers and planners of issues affecting older drivers and highway improvements that can improve their safety. As a result of our efforts, a series of three workshops has already been scheduled in NC during the week of February 5th. In reviewing the draft strategy, there was some discussion of how these workshops might be made available to a wider audience, e.g., through involvement of university engineering or planning schools, ITE, or ITRE. It was suggested that text be added to the strategy description stating that the DOT would explore approaches for doing this.

The committee agreed that this revised strategy should be submitted to the ECHS, along with the Interchange Signage strategy, as our top two strategies.

Strategy 4 – Increase Public Awareness of Issues Affecting Older Drivers and Access to Resources for Maintaining safe Mobility

The goal of this strategy is to develop a comprehensive web site containing information about issues affecting older drivers and ways they can be helped to prolong their safe driving years. While the primary target audience for the web site will be older drivers and concerned family members and friends of an older driver, it is envisioned that the web site will also serve as a resource to aging service providers, physicians, law enforcement, driver licensing officials, and others. Currently, it is the group's recommendation that this web site be hosted by the NC DHHS Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS).

Although the Working Group approved this strategy for presentation to the ECHS, it was agreed that it was of lower priority, since there was still much work that could be done by the group in terms of identifying target audiences, determining how the web site will be supported and maintained, identifying information and links to be included on the site, etc. Phyllis Bridgeman noted that she thought it was important that this strategy be incorporated into North Carolina's state aging plan, which would be finalized in the spring. She also indicated that some form of memorandum of understanding among participating agencies and organizations might be important to demonstrate our commitment and support to the web site. And while DAAS had expressed interest in hosting the website, Phyllis indicated that some seed or grant money would be needed to help support an experienced web site developer who could create a quality site that will appeal to seniors.

It was agreed that the web site would be the primary focus of the next scheduled meeting of the Working Group. After this, a smaller subcommittee will be formed to carry on the work of this strategy. Phyllis agreed to chair this important subcommittee. Jane asked all present to continue to think about the target audiences for the web site and the kinds of information and materials it might present.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the full Coalition/Working Group was scheduled for **Tuesday, November 28**, at the AARP offices in Raleigh, from 11 am – 1:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch at 12:20 pm.

Action Items

Name	Item
Jane Stutts	Revise strategies as discusses and redistribute to all members for final comments by Monday, Oct. 9
Kevin Lacy	Check with Terry Hopkins regarding Intersection strategy and follow up with Jane on next steps.
Jane Stutts	Submit all completed strategies to Cliff Braam by Wednesday, October 11.

Phyllis Bridgeman	Explore DAAS needs for hosting a senior driver safety and mobility web site.
ALL	Review and comment on revised strategies by Monday, Oct. 9

Medical Subcommittee Meeting:

Jane invited anyone interested to stay for an additional while to explore ways the group could assist Kristen Bovid in her master's degree work with the UNC School of Government. Kristen is interested in examining best state practices for educating physicians about medical conditions and driving, and about requirements for reporting at-risk drivers. She is also interested in interviewing physicians and others to learn about their knowledge and attitudes surrounding reporting of at-risk drivers. Susan Stewart agreed to provide Kristen data about NC's Driver Medical Review Program (numbers of drivers in the system by age and disability code), and will try to collect information on the source of new medical reports (licensing personnel, law enforcement, family, physician, etc.) over a four-week period. Susan and Jane will also help identify physicians (including those who review cases for the Medical Review Branch) whom Kristen could interview.